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Indoctrination among the Eipo of the Highlands of West-New Guinea

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Introduction

Introspection, not the worst way to form hypotheses about psychological mechanisms in ourselves, can tell us something about indoctrination's power—how we, as children and juveniles, are influenced by doctrines. Ideologies received from our parents, teachers, and peers are potent mixtures of beliefs and deep emotions. It seems that our physiology has at its disposal specific reward mechanisms reinforcing such ideologies in certain contexts (see McGuire, this volume). Take, for example, the beliefs and rituals developed by the Catholic Church. Blending the sacred and the inexplicable, the congregation's synchronicity in movements, praying, singing, and feeling—all enhanced by the limbically powerful smell of incense—might move one to tears. A similar reaction might attend the hearing of a heroic story, preferably one of sad or tragic love or of true friendship and loyalty that does not flinch even at the threat of death.

I remember well how my reward physiology reacted to being accepted by whom I believed was an important leader figure and to the feeling of being united in thought and action—as an altar boy and as a participant in a student's protest trying to wake up the sleepy city of Erlangen in Franconia to political awareness.

We know very little about the presumably neurobiological mechanisms involved; some critics of evolutionary biology may claim that such mechanisms do not exist at all or that present knowledge does not justify assuming their existence a priori—or that if they do exist, they are brought about by early and later socialization. Indeed, much research is still needed to obtain solid knowledge of how indoctrination works. In this paper I shall focus on the phenomenology of indoctrinating actions and on their possible functions, especially with regard to gender differences, an aspect of moral behavior, male martial powers, and ethnicity. The analysis will be based on two years of fieldwork among the Eipo, a group of mountain Papuans in Irian Jaya, an Indonesian province making up the western half of the island of New Guinea.

At the time we began our research in June 1974, the Eipo had rarely met foreigners and still lived in the traditional way, that is to say, in a manner very similar to neolithic conditions. This was the case not only in the material sense of tools made of stone, bone, and wood, and a mixed subsistence strategy combining simple digging-stick horticulture with collecting and hunting, but, most importantly, with a social life in small, tightly knit communities. The Eipo, in my view, can be seen as "modern models of the past"; how indoctrination functions in their primordial society should be close to the basic mechanism by which specific thoughts are transferred into the brains of a whole community or a demographic group.

The Eipo, modern models of the past

The Eipo and their neighbors of the Mek family of languages and cultures live in the Daerah Jayawijaya region. The term "Mek" (water, river) was introduced to designate the rather uniform languages and cultural traditions in this area (Schiefenhövel 1976). The culture and behavior of the Eipo are here described in the past tense, as a number of (mostly mission-induced) changes have occurred since our fieldwork began (1974–80). Despite this caveat, many of the data and observations could be replicated today.

The Eipo proper inhabit approximately 150 square kilometers in the southernmost (upper) section of the Eipomek valley in a mountainous-to-alpine region at altitudes between 1,600 and 2,300 m above sea level, just north of the central mountain range (see Map 6.1). The lowest passes through this impressive mountain range are about 3,700 m high, yet they were frequently crossed by the Eipo and by their trade and marriage partners. The inhabited sections of the valleys are mostly steeply incised. Anthropogenous grassland (secondary vegetation) was found in a circle around the villages. Rainforest existed between the garden areas and, exclusively, on the mountains above approximately 2,400 m. In 1976 two severe earthquakes destroyed large areas of garden land and some villages. A number of inhabitants were killed or injured. It is likely that similar catastrophes have occurred in the past.

The Eipo proper numbered close to 800 people in 1980; the Mek may be estimated to range between 20–25,000. Indications are that the population is growing. The activities of a fundamentalist Christian mission (UFM), which started work in 1976, have contributed to this, particularly their banning of female infanticide (Schiefenhövel 1988), as has the periodical availability of modern medicine.

The Eipo language (Heeschen 1978; Heeschen and Schiefenhövel 1983) is one of the Mek languages and thereby belongs to the large phylum of Papuan languages spoken by the old population of New Guinea, whose members arrived on the shores of this island about 50,000 years ago. As in the other areas of this region of the highlands, no archaeological data are available for the Mek region. Ethnohistoric surveys are missing as well. It is, however, probable that parts of the Mek area, like those of comparable areas in Papua New Guinea, have been inhabited for more than 10,000 years. Comparison of religious beliefs indicates that important concepts (e.g., that of a mythical ancestral creator) have traveled from east to west. To date it is unknown at which time the sweet potato (*Ipomoea batatas*) was introduced, though this probably occurred between 200 and 300 years ago. Going by the significance of taro (*Colocasia esculenta*) in ceremonial-religious contexts, one can conclude that this crop was central in pre-*Ipomoean* times.

The first known contact between outsiders and a group of Mek people was made early in this century by a team of Dutch surveyors who met some people near Mount Goliath at the southern edge of the central mountain range, far away from the home of the Eipo (de Kock 1912). Members of an interdisciplinary German research team of which I was a member

conducted research in the Eipo valley and some adjacent areas mainly between 1974 and 1980.

The villages of the Eipo and their neighbors in the Mek area were usually built on spots that facilitated defense. They had between 30 and 250 inhabitants. One or more men's houses (*yoek aik*, see below), which often had sacred functions, occupied conspicuous places, either in the center or at the end of the village. The women's seclusion houses (*barye eik*, see below) were usually situated at the periphery of the village. The much smaller and less well-built family houses were the places of family-centered activities.

Descent was patrilineal. The origin of the clans was dated back to mythical times. Animals, sun, or moon were the respective forefathers and were worshipped as totems. Patrilineal and patrilineages were exogamous, a rule that was strictly adhered to, even when choosing premarital or extramarital lovers. Consanguinal and affinal ties were the all important bases for most bonds and transactions. Children knew surprisingly many details of the intricate kinship network.

With increasing complexity and decreasing consanguinity, the following social levels existed: nuclear family, extended family, lineage/clan, men's house community, village, and political alliance of a number of villages. Loyalty was usually high among members of the same clan/lineage. Men's house communities, led by specific clans but consisting of members of several clans, played an important role as units of work and political decision-making. On the basis of their intellectual, oratorical, social, and physical skills "Big men" or "Great men" (as Godelier 1982 and others name them; the Eipo term is *sisinang*) led the village communities as persons who took initiatives and pursued plans. They also respected rules and traditions while using them to their own advantage. Men who took the role of war leader (*mal deyenang*, see below) were particularly respected. In this protomeritocracy, leadership was dependent on the actual power of the leader; persons who showed signs of losing competence lost their positions, too.

"Big men" exercised a certain amount of social control, but more important was the process of enforcing social norms through public opinion, which, in turn, was shaped by gossip and the discussion of disputed issues and, particularly, through belief in extrahuman powers, such as harmful spirits in nature or "black magic," the latter allegedly performed by female or male "witches" (see below). In this way, disease functioned as punishment for social wrongdoing and, thereby, as an executive power.

The visible world was also thought to be inhabited by numerous beings—souls of the deceased, zoomorphic spirits of the forests, and rivers, and powerful shapers of nature or bringers of culture who since mythical times had influenced people's lives. Yaleenye ("the one coming from the East") was the most prominent such cultural hero. In the sacred men's houses these mythical powers, symbolized by holy relics, were housed and honored. Various ceremonies pervading everyday life were performed to ensure the well-being of humans, domestic animals, and crops.

The first and most important initiation (*kwit*) of boys between approximately 4 and 15 years of age was a major event, involving participants from other valleys. It was held at intervals of about 10 years, depending on how many boys were available for this costly ceremony. Coinitiates kept a lifelong bond, addressing each other with a special term (*kwitnang*) and rallying for mutual support. Second and third stages were the bestowing of the cane waistband and penis gourd, and the *mum*, the typical male back decoration hanging down from the head. Large, opulent ceremonial dance feasts for visitors strengthened ties, particularly with trade and marriage partners from the southern side of the mountains. Rare grand ceremonies, bringing together inhabitants from distant, sometimes inimical valleys, were held to ensure

the fertility of the soil; their inherent potential to transcend ethnic boundaries, which were, at normal times, solidified by we-group indoctrination, can be seen as a weak counterforce to those mechanisms leading to the small-scale ethnicity that is so typical for New Guinea.

Gender indoctrination

The culture of the Eipo was characterized by marked gender differences, even antagonism. Eipo males wore, after their second initiation as adolescents, a belt (*deyatenga*) made of spliced rattan fibers wound tightly around the waist. They also wore a conspicuous penis gourd (*sanyum*) held in place by a string looped around the scrotum and a waist string attached to the tip of the calabash holding it permanently in a quasi-erect position. The rattan belt compressed the lower abdomen, thus causing the width of the shoulders to appear bigger (Fig. 6.1). Girls and women, in contrast, wore small grass skirts that accentuated the roundish appearance of the pelvic region (Fig. 6.2). Male and female shapes among the Eipo can thus be seen as a triangle standing on the apex (broad shoulders, small waist) for men, versus one resting on its base (waist broader than shoulders) for women, as has been described by E. Jessen for European and African cultures (1981). Even from a distance, men and women were unmistakably different in appearance, and this outward difference was reflected in more symbolic realms of their culture as well.

The penis gourd can best be understood as a "frozen dominance erection" that has phylogenetic precursors in some infrahuman primates (Wickler 1966; Eibl-Eibesfeldt and Wickler 1968). The phallocrypts can thus be interpreted as cultural signs of the martial prowess of their bearers and of male supremacy in general.

The Eipo and other Papuan cultures further enhanced the differences between women and men through social institutions such as men's and women's houses, male initiation, gender-specific work tasks, and food taboos, as well as the mythically founded fear of men vis à vis the vagina with its fluids and female sexuality in general. To come in contact with menstrual blood was seen as extremely dangerous for males in the Eipo society as well as in many other highland groups. Men declined to sit on a piece of timber we had fastened to our house so that the medical and dental patients could be seated. They said that women had sat there before and that they would thus be harmed by the forces emanating from vulva and vagina. An empty rice bag placed over the seat and reserved strictly for males solved the problem.

Whereas girls and boys of all societies clearly identify with members of their own sex (cp. Skrzypek 1983), which can be seen as a biopsychological basis for intragender group formation and solidarity, cultures have considerable leeway in constructing gender relationships. The Eipo and many Papuan cultures go, as it were, back in phylogenetic time and create, through phallocrypts versus grass skirts, female versus male worlds, a cultural parallel to the marked sexual dimorphism which was typical for our Australopithecine ancestors, where males were up to double the size of females. In this sense then, the Eipo-type gender indoctrination produces a very archaic concept of male and female as basically two different entities, which cooperate in production and reproduction but which are also separated by clear boundaries.

Boys were separated from their mothers in order to be transformed into real men. The Eipo felt that while boys had to be shaped into real men through exposure to male culture, girls could become women and mothers by just growing up naturally. This antithesis is possibly true for all Papuan cultures and seems to be missing in the (more "modern") Austronesian cultures (Schiefenhövel 1992). In the men's house, boys, male juveniles, and unmarried men had their place and often spent the nights there, in the circle of other male members fanned out around the fire. Here, boys and male adolescents watched adult men perform the functions

of the *sisinang*, the ones who had a say in society. In the men's house they witnessed the intricate, skillful, and sometimes daring schemes to host large feasts for allied villages or to conduct prominent religious ceremonies.

Women had a *pendant* to the men's house, the *barye aik*, a house, usually at the fringe of the village, where they spent the days of their menstrual cycle, and where, assisted by other women, they gave birth and spent the *puerperium*. They could also stay here when they were very sick or when they had serious disagreements with their husbands. Men were not allowed to enter the women's house, except in cases when they were called to conduct, as mediators to the extrahuman world, religious-therapeutic rites to help parturients in difficult childbirth. Access to the men's house and the sacred village ground around it was taboo for women; the latter was, however, used by both men and women during the ritual dances (*mote*). The division of Eipo society into female and male sectors also becomes quite evident through the ground plan of their villages (see Map 6.2).

Why the Papuan gender concept has to be backed up by such strong sexual and gender antagonism and corresponding indoctrination remains an open question. Other traditional cultures and modern northern cultures have different strategies. In the matrilineal society of the Trobriand islanders (Malinowski 1922; 1929; 1935; Weiner 1976; Bell-Krannhals 1990), the biological difference between women and men is diminished, e.g., through a kind of "unisex" dress for certain dances connected to the *milamala* harvest ceremonies and through close contact of the sexes in everyday life. Also, Trobriand men do not harbor, as do men in Papuan societies, the horror of menstrual blood and other vaginal fluids as possibly fatally harmful substances. Trobriand women perform a socially and politically important ceremony connected to the chain of mortuary rites (*sagali*), the exchange of banana fiber skirts, *doba*, which takes place on the village ground and where men are bystanders, impressed by this demonstration of female industriousness, social skill, and personal power. Girls in Austronesian Trobriand society are indoctrinated to be, as is true for Papuan societies, caring givers of and providers for life, but they are also encouraged to excel in the sociopolitical arena. In Papuan cultures this is an aspiration reserved only for males.

Morality indoctrination

While there was some degree of fair play and ritualization in intraalliance fights, and even in warfare against an external enemy (see below), the torturing and killing of "witches" of either sex and the behavior towards their corpses was characterized by outright brutality and an almost total absence of empathic feelings. One such event was documented (Fig. 6.3). Gungum, a man of the Munggona village, was left by his wife who returned to her native village of Moknerkon when their son was about two to three years old. This boy died. His death was immediately attributed to "black magic" (*kire*) assumed to have come from Moknerkon. Burang, a woman born in a village quite far in the northwest of the central Eipo area and widowed in Moknerkon, came to visit the central village Munggona one day. At the same time, a man of Moknerkon who was believed to have the power of a seer (*asing ketenenang*) came to Gungum and told him that he had found in the house of Burang a bundle hanging over her fireplace, that he knew it contained food remains of Gungum's dead boy, and that this bundle was therefore a magic bundle (*kirto*) used to inflict harm and death to people. He handed over this corpus delicti. The verdict was thus spoken. Gungum shot Burang near the women's house. The body of the dead woman was dragged to the river, stoned, and shot at. Many of the participants were apparently highly aroused, even on the second day, when the brutal acts against the corpse continued. A few, mostly female,

spectators showed concern in their faces and did not take part in the physical or verbal attacks. But the other villagers, including children, seemingly enjoyed being part of the scene. It was obvious that Burang had no support in Moknerkon where she had been married. Her eldest but still juvenile son symbolically shot some arrows towards Munggona village; nobody attempted revenge against her killers. The opposite would have been the case if she had had strong and influential male relatives. In my view, Burang was sacrificed by the people of Moknerkon in order to make peace again with the powerful village of Munggona, whose inhabitants had blamed Moknerkon for the boy's death.

I had recorded reports of brutal torturing and killing of "witches" before but had tended to see them as gross exaggerations. What we witnessed after the death of Burang (Dieter Heunemann documented this on film) was shocking for us who knew the Eipo as spontaneous and at times aggressive, but not as people who would behave in such a seemingly unnecessary, brutal manner. Knauft (1985), in his account of "good company and violence" among the Gebusi, lowland Papuans in Papua New Guinea, has described similar behaviors towards "sorcerers" who had been "convicted."

This form of violence is relevant to the present chapter for the following reason. The Eipo knew that their lives were in almost constant danger. An arrow sent from the bow of an enemy or a covillager could carry death as did the many, basically uncontrollable superhuman forces of nature. These threats could even enter the inner sphere of one's house. One such threat was that of being harmed or killed by a human "witch" or "sorcerer," who was believed to have the power of inflicting disease and death through *kire*. The reasons for this dreaded act were basically twofold. Either the person in command of *kire* bore a grudge against his or her victim, or somebody paid the "sorcerer" to punish somebody in this way. The process involved what is termed magic of personal leavings: the "sorcerer" secures, clandestinely, something of the body of the future victim, whether discarded food, cut-off hair or fingernails, feces, sperm, or menstrual blood. The "magic," involving the heat of fire and sacred formulae, was performed, *pars pro toto*, on these substances.

Whereas disease and death thought to be sent by the ancestors or, more often, by some of the powerful spirits of nature were usually accepted fatalistically as retaliation for some social or religious wrongdoing, the Eipo deemed the act of *kire* as particularly horrible. The "witch" had placed himself or herself outside the solidarity of normal life. That is why they, once found out (usually by some form of divination, cp. Knauft 1985) were tortured and killed with so much brutality by the relatives of the deceased. One can perhaps best describe the motivational background for these kinds of acts as "moralistic aggression" (Trivers 1971). Morality is essential to every culture because it enhances, through its religiously founded norms and rules, uniformity of behavior, predictability of actions, "we-feeling," and other elements that are important in the competition of cultural groups with each other.

The example of what one Eipo village did to a suspected "witch" shows that they were particularly adamant in this area of moral behavior: humans should not send, via "black magic," disease and death to other humans. That is the message of the brutal killing and treatment of the corpses of "witches." One can see these spectacular public events of moralistic aggression as a culturally interesting form of indoctrination. Its function seems to be to ensure that life is not threatened more than it already is and that people should not become the source of harmful magic. The message of the savage sanctions could be described as "See what we do with persons who stand outside the rules of our lives and who send *kire*! They will be pursued, tortured, and killed without mercy."

Tragically, the persons who were accused of having performed *kire* were, most likely, perfectly innocent, even in the emic sense. I have never heard of anybody who boasted to

have *kire* powers (as is not uncommon in other parts of Melanesia); that would, in light of the sanctions, be rather suicidal. It seems that these unfortunate women and men became victims of political plots. Fabricated accusation and indoctrination go hand in hand, from Stone Age society to the present.

Warrior indoctrination

Despite the fact that the Eipo were usually friendly and controlled, the potential for aggressive acts was quite high and did not need much triggering. In both intraalliance fights and interalliance warfare, approximately 3 persons per 1,000 inhabitants died of violence per year during the time of our documentation; every fourth male was likely to be killed rather than to die of natural or accidental causes (Table 6.1).

Table 6.1. Homicide rate compared to all deaths per year in some Papuan cultures

	Women	Men	Total
<i>Eipo</i>			
Deaths	8	17	25
Homicide (Observed cases)	1 (13%)	4 (24%)	5 (20%) 3/1000/year
<i>Gebusi</i> (Knauff 1985)			
Homicide (Anamnestic data)	(29%)	(35%)	(32%) 7/1000/year
<i>Nalumin</i> (Bercovitch 1989)			
			1/1000/year
<i>Kunimaipa</i> (McArthur 1971)			
			5/1000/year
<i>Etoro</i> (Kelly n.d.)			
			10/1000/year

Ethnosemantically, the Eipo distinguished two major forms of aggressive encounter (Table 6.2). *Intragroup aggression* (*abala*, "fight") was that type of confrontation resulting from often trivial disagreements between persons in one village or between members of different but friendly and allied villages. Verbal quarrels, physical attacks, including the use of sticks, stone adzes, and the like, and (exclusively by males) shooting arrows were the usual stages of escalation. In one case, three warriors died because one man thought his dog had been killed by a man from a neighboring village. *Intergroup aggression* (*male fey bin*, literally: to go around having one's bow pulled; also called *ise mal*, literally: the arrow of the spirits—"warfare") in this case involved enemies who were, apparently since time immemorial, the inhabitants of a number of villages in the valley of the Fa river, two to three hours walk west of the valley of the Eipo river. Ceremonial cannibalism was occasionally involved, reflecting the hatred and violence directed against the enemy.

Table 6.2. Concepts of aggression among the Eipo, Highland West-New Guinea

	<i>Abala</i> (fight)	<i>Ise Mal</i> (war)
Type	intragroup/interkin	intergroup
Constellation	changing	"hereditary" enemy
Cause	spontaneous/individual	spontaneous/historic
Participants	small groups	villages, alliances
Duration	days to months	months to years
Ritualization	high	medium
Indoctrination	none	marked, dehumanizing
Truce	yes	no (?)
Homicide rate	1–2/1000/year	1–2/1000/year
Reaction to death of opponents	feeling of success, sometimes regret	triumph, official dance feast
Cannibalism	none	in certain cases
Mortuary rites	normal exposure in tree	ditto, if no prior cannibalism
Termination	peace treaty, usually lasting	peace treaty, temporary
Function	"residue" of human aggression in akephalic societies	indoctrination-enhanced aggression = motor for cultural pseudospeciation

How important it was that a man did not diverge too much from the image of a reliable, good fighter is illustrated by a story capturing an incident that happened while we were in the Eipomek valley and that was recorded by V. Heeschen (1990, pp. 208–10; summary of the narrative, translation of the quoted passages into English and additions in brackets by W.Sch.).

Ningke, Mangat, and Babum were in a garden digging out sweet potatoes. Ningke and Babum were filling them into stringbags while Mangat went down to the *Min*-stream to look for something. He discovered a group of enemies from Marikla and warned Ningke and Babum. The enemies shot at Mangat who was closest to them and wounded him with five arrows {Mangat was severely injured and suffered an almost complete pneumothorax, i.e., collapse of both lungs; he showed no signs of panic, however, received traditional religious plus modern medical treatment and survived}. Ningke fought back, shooting at the Marikla men. Babum hid in the grass, keeping still so that the enemy did not discover him. When the men from Marikla had left, Babum shouted: "Damn it! They were shooting at us and have tried to kill us!". . .

When Mangat had been brought to the village (Fig. 6.4) and a group of warriors had unsuccessfully tried to follow the men from Marikla to take revenge, the Eipo men said: "We are coming back with Babum but he hid out of fear . . . and when he claims that we were fighting back together, then he is lying. He is a woman through and through because he hid in the grass. He is no man." . . . And to Babum they said: "You went with your cuirass {Babum was the only one wearing this rather effective protection made of rattan}. For what then did you go out there with your cuirass on? To wound an *orong* lizard or a *bal* lizard or to wound a grasshopper? That you took your bow, that you already compared yourself with somebody who shouts 'We would fight, oh, could we just fight!' Did you behave this way so that the women would see you? Did you put your cuirass on because of this? . . .

"We have Mangat lying here, whom they have riddled with arrows. You are not one of those who take a bow. A small children's bow you have and because you have not learned to do something proper with it you hide in the grass. Because you are a woman you are behaving this way. Because you have the soul of a ghost, because you have your heart only for yourself, because you are of a different kind your friends were about to hit you . . . You squatted there deep in the grass. You need only have shown yourself fighting and retreating from the enemy. For the two others had no cuirass but the same skin as you. They are your people. But while they were moving and trying to flee you were hiding. In the meantime your friend was shooting arrows against the enemy. If you two, Ningke and you Babum had done something together, had moved aiming and shooting, then the enemy would have retreated. The whole thing happened only because you are a woman." Babum kept silent.

This story will probably be told for many generations to come, despite the fact that the Eipo enjoy, for the time being, a kind of *pax christiana*. The indoctrinating power of this report of an actual event and other such accounts is strong and long-lasting. Babum, who was, incidentally, unmarried, certainly did not figure as a role model for the boys and juveniles. Living with the Eipo it was evident how highly martial qualities in men were valued. Boys, as soon as their socialization shifted from the family to the peer group, i.e., at an age of 3 to 4 years, trained to be good marksmen (Fig. 6.5) and engaged in long and enthusiastically fought war games, either throwing the rather solid stalks of high *Mischanthum floridulum* grass at each other or shooting at opponents with blunt, but still dangerous, arrows. A number of male juveniles and adults had only one eye because of this sort of warrior socialization. But no parent ever attempted to stop their boys from getting involved in these games. On the contrary, going to or coming from the gardens they often stopped to watch their offspring attacking and ducking in the grassland around the village. Their commentaries featured praise for the brave and admonishment for the less accomplished.

The man who started an armed conflict involving at least several fighters on each side and lasting for weeks or months was called *mal deyenang*, the one who is at the base of the arrow, the war leader. All people killed on the side of the enemy were attributed to him because he was responsible for the outbreak of violence and for the consequences, including having to make compensatory payments for killed allies.

This institution of a formally responsible war leader had basically two effects. First, it reduced the likelihood of individual revenge, the natural outcome should a marksman whose arrow had actually killed somebody be known, which was often the case. Secondly, it enhanced the fame of the *mal deyenang*, the more successfully his war raged, the more frequently his name was mentioned. Personal revenge against him was not so easy to achieve for the enemy because the *mal deyenang* was usually a very powerful, martially skilled man who had enough male relatives to protect him.

It should be noted that Babyal, the leader of the Eipo in the renewed war against their enemy in the Famek valley, was not only a muscular, physically very powerful man, but also very intelligent and personable, combining sensitivity, accomplished social skills, and concern for others. War leaders in these primordial, akephalic communities cannot be criminals with nothing but great lust for murder. If they are not backed by the community, all their martial aspirations lead to nothing.

Eipo war leaders were not necessarily men with successful polygynous marriages. That seemed to depend more on other qualities, particularly that of diplomatic skill, since it was seemingly difficult to control two potentially antagonistic wives plus their families. It remains uncertain, then, whether being a great Eipo warrior yielded a bonus in inclusive fitness (as

was described for the Yanomamö by Chagnon 1968), but it is still true that there was a high social bonus for being a good and brave fighter, and it is perfectly plausible that being a powerful and skillful warrior could have helped in getting attention from women. At least that is probably what most Eipo men believed. Knauff (1990) has presented a theoretical discussion of the various elements and motors of Papuan warfare that sheds light on the intriguing question of why the men in these societies were so martial and why they conducted so many fights and wars.

Indoctrination towards warriorhood in Eipo society is intrinsically linked to the perception that one's own community is in danger of being attacked by the enemy; as a matter of fact, taking the lead in warfare against these "others" provided powerful identity to one's own group. Ethnicity is thus strongly stressed in the small-scale Papuan societies. Among all types of indoctrination, that directed to the maintenance of group differences was possibly the most intense—perhaps because the objective differences between the Eipo and their enemies were, in fact, very small.

Ethnicity indoctrination

In 1974 a man of Munggona, the central village of the Eipomek valley, was killed by men of the Famek valley. The war that had been dormant for some time started anew. The motivation was akin to that which led Menelaus and Agamemnon to attack Troy. The Eipo Helene was a widow, a 28-year-old vital woman (Fig. 6.6) who had fallen in love with a man from the enemy valley and moved to his village. Her two brothers, Babyal (see above) and Irim, both in the prime of life, did not tolerate their sister's elopement and took her back to Munggona. The men in the Famek valley were enraged and renewed the war, which lasted for almost one year.

Several men on both sides were killed. One of the warriors from Munggona, Basing, was eaten by the enemy in the typical ceremonial act of cannibalism (for oral accounts of such occurrences see Heeschen 1990). The emic rationale for eating a person is neither hunger for protein nor the incorporation of the strength or spirit of the dead person. My informant Kwengkweng expressed it like this: "We so much hate the enemy that we eat one of them in case we can carry his body to our village. When we eat him, we destroy him completely; nothing will be left of him. That is why we eat people." Cannibalism, in its spectacular violation of ordinary human behavior (this is also the view of the Eipo themselves) is thus another tool of indoctrination towards ethnicity.

During the year of warfare, in which seven warriors on both sides were killed, some behaviors changed markedly. Whereas it was quite acceptable to talk about the people in the Famek valley in normal times, my interaction partners now invariably stopped me in such situations and said: "Isenang, mem!"—they are ghosts, forbidden (to talk about them). In many other ways, too, the enemy was dehumanized.

Only sometimes were real "battles" fought with rows of armed men shooting at each other from a certain distance, usually across the Eipo river. Mostly the warriors were engaged in a kind of guerilla tactic, trying to ambush or otherwise surprise the enemy (Fig. 6.7). Each time the Munggona fighters returned from what they (sometimes mistakenly) believed to have been a successful day, with an enemy wounded or killed, they performed the impressive dance spectacle (*mote*) which was also carried out during visiting feasts among friends. K. F. Koch (1974), in his account of conflict and its management among the Yali, just west of the Mek, has provided an explanation for the many lives lost in the revenge systems typical of Papuan (and many other) cultures: since all interactions are dyadic, conflicts cannot be transferred to a third party, and unless one side chooses to give in and be dominated or flee

and abandon territory, both must resort to the law of retaliation with its well-known Old Testament principle. Warfare and ethnicity indoctrination, then, serve a defensive function, in that one's own group does not give in, is not conquered by the enemy, and thereby belongs to "those who held onto home" as Robbins (1982) termed it for the Auyana in the eastern highlands of Papua New Guinea.

During this period, people going about their everyday chores, whether working in or returning from the garden, were under a continuous threat of attack. The warriors carried out a silent ceremony, *mal tekene* (standing with arrows). They assembled in one broad row on one of the hills easily visible from Munggona and the other villages of the alliance, holding their shining yellow arrows and their bows high up in the air. Our informants explained that this was to remind every warrior that he is at war, that he must not slacken in the group's defense, that every man must come to fight the enemy. Elsewhere (Schieffenhövel 1995), I have described these acts of propaganda as essential elements of traditional warfare. Without this appeal, the war would probably not have lasted so long, because the men and their families would have tired of fighting, would have been eager to return to cultivating their gardens, and would have worried about the rising death toll.

Mal tekene also served to build up the difference between "us" and "the others," thereby promoting the process of cultural diversification, which is so pronounced in Melanesia with its more than 700 languages and cultures. The ethological concept of "character enhancement" (*Kontrastbetonung* is the German term) originally was used to describe the evolution of distinct populations of animals and, eventually, of new species from a once sympatric homogeneous population. The same concept can serve to explain the cultural process of pseudospeciation (Ericson 1966), which is so typical for all human populations and which is dependent on the feeling and the principle of ethnicity, one of its driving forces.

Eipo ways of seeing their enemy-neighbors, with whom they rarely intermarried but from whom they were only fractionally different, were channeled through indoctrination. "Isenang, mem!"—do not talk about these "ghosts" over there; they are not real people and we should not have anything in common with them. My conclusion from 30 years of fieldwork in this part of the world is that the history of Melanesia, with its vast number of languages and its small-scale jigsaw puzzle of cultures, has been shaped decisively by cultural speciation in which warfare and its underlying indoctrinations, especially that defining the good warrior and the alien enemy, have played an important part.

Conclusion

Indoctrination in quasi-Stone Age New Guinea works toward in-group differentiation, toward making dead sure that everybody knows exactly to which group she or he belongs. Ethnicity indoctrination in remote New Guinea as well as in the heart of Europe, as we learn painfully every day, is a very powerful mechanism.

As Feil (1987), Merlan and Rumsey (1991), and Wiessner (this volume) show for other highland Papuan cultures, one form of indoctrination can be directed to partially overcoming ethnicity to build larger alliances, traditionally aimed at creating large-scale networks that serve the ambitions of powerful males (see also Strathern 1971; Meggit 1972; Feil 1987), who very skillfully direct the risky transactions involving enormous amounts of valuables like pigs, shells, and, nowadays, money. As has been said above, the Eipo and their neighbors were also connected by one such overarching ceremony, which ensured, more than other rites, the continuing fertility of the earth. But on the overall scale, this ideology did not have the same everyday effect as the one stressing ethnicity.

In other highland societies, cultural character enhancement through group indoctrination and warfare was equally strong, as is described in the monographs by Gardner and Heider (1969) and Heider (1970) for the Dani, by Hylkema (1974) for the Nalum and adjacent eastern neighbors of the Mek, and by Koch (1974) for the Jalé (Jalí, Yali), their direct western neighbors. As with many evolutionary traits in us humans, the biopsychology underlying indoctrination seems to be a rather versatile instrument, allowing different solutions to a multitude of ecocultural challenges.

Everywhere enculturation relies on indoctrination. It promotes learning of what is good and bad, or only forbidden and permitted, of what should be aspired to and what should be shunned. Indoctrination occurs in the constant process of shaping the individual to become a reliable, predictable member of the group.

Indoctrination among the Eipo did not take place during special occasions, except in a few highlighted instances like cannibalistic rites or the triumphant dance feasts after the killing of an enemy. It happened on a day-to-day basis and in a rather inconspicuous and unspectacular way. The "phatic commune," in Malinowski's term, which was, of course, also a nonverbal commune, was thus constantly exposed to the values and priorities founded in sacred tradition. This form of low-key, ever present indoctrination seems to be rather effective, probably not only under conditions similar to those of the Environment of Evolutionary Adaptedness, but also in our times. In our cultures, where individualism is more pronounced than it has probably ever been in history, the uniformity of this process and its goals are dissolved and have given room to a host of in-group/subculture ideals, which, again, are achieved by massive indoctrination—partly of the neolithic kind found in Highland New Guinea, partly through modern mediums such as videoclips.

It seems an extremely difficult task to nicely separate good indoctrination from bad indoctrination, but it is also clear that there will not be any cultural values without it. The European ethnic wars of the early 1990s, in a subcontinent many believed was immunized against this type of destruction by two world wars, have resurrected the ethic: "My country, right or wrong." Clearly, the Eipo are also following this motto, albeit "my people" in their perspective. One possible way out of the indoctrination dilemma is perhaps to indoctrinate children to be vigilant so that the forces of indoctrination do not overpower them. With this kind of built-in indoctrination brake we might be able to make a step forward from the neolithic conditions that characterize the life of the Eipo and in which Western societies are still so much embedded.

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